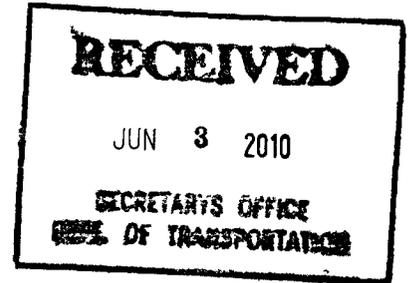


County Executive John R. Leopold
P.O. Box 2700, Annapolis, MD 21404
410-222-1821

Planning



May 25, 2010

The Honorable Beverly Swaim-Staley
Secretary, Maryland Department of Transportation
7201 Corporate Drive
PO Box 548
Hanover, MD 21076

Dear Secretary Swaim-Staley:

Thank you for the great cooperation shown by the agencies of your Department to Anne Arundel County. I appreciate the positive working relationship that we have and look forward to continuing this approach with the Department. We know that available revenues have been greatly reduced, but the transportation needs in Anne Arundel County will demand attention if we are to maintain the safety and efficiency of the overall State transportation system given the challenges we face due to Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), National Security Agency (NSA) and Cyber Command growth.

Anne Arundel County is home to many of the State's important transportation assets including the BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge, and portions of the Port of Baltimore. The State Capital, Fort George G. Meade, the National Security Agency, Arundel Mills and other development in the western area of the County, are important contributors to the County's economic health and, in particular, the job growth that is necessary to sustain the State's economic vitality. In light of the BRAC-related expansion at Fort Meade, the planned growth of NSA, and the establishment of the U.S. Cyber Command at Fort Meade, maintaining the accessibility to these national strategic assets will become even more challenging given the continuing revenue forecasts.

Despite significant reductions in highway user revenues, the County continues to be a good partner in funding the necessary studies and construction to improve State infrastructure. The County funded the initial planning studies for Annapolis Road (MD 175) and the environmental assessment for Fort Meade-Laurel Road (MD 198). We are constructing improvements to Central Avenue (MD 214) at Muddy Creek Road (MD 468) in Mayo and Hog Neck Road (MD 607) at MD 100 in Lake Shore. We have completed 30 percent plans for multiple intersections around Fort Meade in hopes of partnering with the Department to construct necessary improvements to reduce congestion, which will be experienced due to the BRAC at Fort Meade.

MD 175 remains as the County's highest primary road priority to support the anticipated BRAC-generated growth in employment at Fort Meade as well as the NSA and Cyber Command. Upon completion of the FONSI for MD 175, we request that the Department fund 30 percent design of the selected alternative since this alignment is experiencing development pressure even during the economic downturn.



Also important are other access improvements to this area including MD 198, as much of the BRAC-generated travel will come from Northern Virginia. As noted, the County has funded the environmental assessment planning stage, but looks to the Department to follow through with necessary funding to advance the selected alternative to 30 percent plans to protect necessary right-of-way and to inform the corridor's land development process. MD 198 remains the County's highest priority on the secondary system and we look forward to working with MDOT to advance this project through design and to identify any near-term improvements which could be constructed to offer early relief to anticipated growth in travel demand.

Finally, we are participating in funding the design studies necessary to construct the Central Maryland Transit Operations Facility and see this activity as being vital to support the near-term transit strategy to offer transit options to the region's growing population and employment base, partly because of BRAC as well as other development in Central Maryland. Also in support of enhancing transit service in and around Fort Meade, the County is seeking funds to purchase at least four mid-size buses, as part of an overall program of sixteen buses. This request is consistent with recommendations from both the OEA funded transit study and the Transit Development Plan.

Our priority list is enclosed. The list includes projects identified in previous priority letters, but there are also new projects included in this list as times and circumstances change and our priorities must be adaptable to those changes. The attached list identifies those projects: highway and transit; primary and secondary facilities; conservation; preservation; and safety which are our priorities to maintain the mobility of our residents, visitors and work force and to enhance the accessibility to our important activity centers. We are looking forward to continuing a mutually beneficial working relationship with you and your Department.

Sincerely,



JOHN R. LEOPOLD
County Executive

Enclosure

cc: Maryland House and Senate Delegation
Members of County Council
Ron Bowen, Director, Department of Public Works
Larry R. Tom, Planning and Zoning Officer
Robert Leib, Special Assistant for BRAC and Education
George Cardwell, Planning Administrator

TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES

TRANSIT

DEVELOPMENT/EVALUATION PROGRAM

Central Maryland Transit Operations Facility

The Central Maryland Transit Operations Facility is a combined effort among MTA, Howard and Anne Arundel counties to locate, design, construct and manage the operation of a transit facility to address the mobility needs of both counties. The facility will help the County provide more cost effective transit service supporting the anticipated development spurred in part by BRAC recommendations, as well as other development in the western portion of the County and will reduce operating expenses for all transit operators. We ask that MTA provide funds for design and construction of the facility, as well as capital and operating assistance for necessary bus service to support the region.

Parole Intermodal Facility

This transit facility, included in previous Priority Letters, is envisioned to be located in Parole and to support the current and increasing transit demand within the Annapolis/Parole area and to serve as a hub for transit service connecting Washington and Baltimore areas, plus Fort Meade and BWI. The capacity at the HS Truman Park and Ride Lot, even with recent expansion, and the Annapolis Transfer Center on Spa Road will be surpassed and it is unlikely that more than one transit facility will be constructed in the area. The redevelopment of Parole is spurring revitalization. Thus, we need to initiate a planning study to identify the program and its requirements, including parcel size and possible location. We have coordinated this request with the City of Annapolis and they also support the need to conduct necessary studies.

MARC Service Capacity and Accessibility Improvements

To keep up with the increasing ridership, MARC must continue to replace its current rail passenger car fleet with bi-level cars. To improve accessibility, a garage must be constructed in Odenton, which has the largest number of boardings for any suburban station in the system. The garage will increase accessibility to the system, serve as a focal point for transit to support development at Fort Meade, and the Odenton Town Center, and will reduce the sprawl and inefficiency of surface lots scattered throughout Odenton.

LOCALLY OPERATED TRANSIT SERVICE

Implementation of these routes and services (all recommended within the Transit Development Plan (TDP)) will provide a basic layer of transit for much of the County and the City of Annapolis. We believe that the routes, identified below and recommended by the TDP, should be implemented as soon as possible to serve existing mobility needs. We also ask that MTA provide funds for bus capital purchase and operating subsidies in accordance with that Plan to support both of the locally operated services in the County (Annapolis Transit and Central Maryland Regional Transit).

- Connection services among Fort Meade, MARC/WMATA stations, surrounding communities, Anne Arundel Community College, and BWI, a program requiring up to sixteen buses.
- Weekday Annapolis Triangle shuttle and connecting shuttle to Annapolis Towne Centre at Parole.
- ADA Demand-Response services in Annapolis and Parole areas.

HIGHWAYS

PRIMARY DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION PROGRAM

The roadway segments displayed below will require project planning studies before the actual system improvements can be constructed. The lead time is longer, but the need for the improvements is great. These projects are included in the Highway Needs Inventory (HNI) and on the Long Range Plan of the Baltimore Region, and unless noted, have been identified in previous correspondence regarding the County's priorities.

Annapolis Road (MD 175) from Baltimore-Washington Parkway (MD 295) to Telegraph Road (MD 170): Multilane Reconstruct: This project remains the County's highest priority on the primary system. The project is necessary to support the increasing travel demand at and around Fort Meade as a result of changes in installation security, increases in activity at the post as well as development occurring around the installation. Upon completion of the FONSI, we ask for 30 percent design of the selected alternative.

John Hanson Highway (US 50) from the William Preston Lane, Jr. Memorial Bridge to the Prince George's County Line – Managed Lanes: This is the major highway serving the Washington Metropolitan Area, Bay Bridge, Eastern Shore and City of Annapolis. Portions of the facility, especially from MD 665 to the Severn River Bridge experience recurring congestion. We ask that recommended improvements to US 50 at the Severn River Bridge be funded for construction.

I-97 from John Hanson Highway (US 50/301) to Patuxent Parkway (MD 32)-Managed Lanes: Increased attractions among Fort Meade, the Annapolis area, and the Eastern Shore have generated more travel demand and is causing recurring congestion. There is a need to initiate project planning.

Solomons Island Road (MD 2) from West Street (MD 450) to South River Bridge—Continuous six-lane road section: Increasing travel demand along MD 2, coupled with the geometric improvements constructed south of the South River Bridge have created a need to improve the typical section north of the bridge.

Baltimore-Washington Parkway (MD 295) from MD 100 to I-195—Freeway Reconstruct six lanes: This section of MD 295 has become more congested with the increased activity at BWI Thurgood Marshall International Airport (BWI), Fort Meade, and Arundel Mills. Planning for this corridor improvement should include the Hanover Road interchange and the Hanover Connector Road from the Parkway to Aviation Boulevard (MD 170). We request that SHA complete the environmental assessment on the segment between MD 100 and I-195, including the Hanover Road interchange and begin 30 percent design of the selected alternative.

Robert Crain Highway (MD 3) from the Prince George's County Line to Patuxent Freeway (MD 32/I-97): We request that SHA complete the project planning phase for improvements to this corridor. The improvements will be necessary to meet the increasing travel demand between increasing residential and employment growth to the south of the alignment and increases in population and job growth in and around Fort Meade and BWI Airport. Following Federal concurrence, please advance design and construction of the segment between Waugh Chapel Road and MD 32 and intersection improvements at MD 424.

MD 100 from Howard County Line to I-97:

If the State advances Howard County's request for improvements along MD 100, we recommend that the corridor improvements be extended to I-97. This improvement will support growing east-west travel demand, Fort Meade, BWI and the increasingly heavy commuter traffic between Anne Arundel and Howard Counties.

Governor Ritchie Highway (MD 2) from John Hanson Highway (US 50/301) to Arundel Expressway (MD 10): The lack of a consistent typical section, coupled with lane drops at intersections and weaving, has caused congestion, safety and other operational problems along this major north-south route in the County. This project should include an evaluation of alternates at the College Parkway/MD 2 intersection.

Patuxent Freeway (MD 32) from MD 175 to I-95: Growth in east-west travel coupled with planned expansion of NSA, Fort Meade, Cyber Command and their contractor base will only exacerbate recurring congestion and the need for increased capacity. We recommend initiation of project planning and wish to have managed lanes considered as part of that process.

SECONDARY DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION PROGRAM

Fort Meade Road (MD 198) from Baltimore-Washington Parkway to Patuxent Freeway (MD 32): Because MD 198 is the County's highest priority on the secondary system, the County is funding the environmental assessment and seeks the timely identification of short-term improvements. We ask that SHA rapidly complete the environmental studies and initiate 30 percent design on the selected alternative. The project is necessary to meet current and anticipated travel demand occurring as a result of development in Laurel, BRAC at Fort Meade and growth of NSA and to maintain safe traffic movement.

Ridge Road (MD 713) from Annapolis Road (MD 175) to Arundel Mills Boulevard: This is a parallel route to the Baltimore-Washington Parkway and offers direct access to Fort Meade via the Rockenbach Road gate. It will be directly impacted by BRAC because of these factors. We have completed the Office of Economic Adjustment funded study of intersections along MD 713 and believe that study should be the basis for travel demand and therefore need to advance this project into project planning.

Jessup Road (MD 175) from Baltimore Washington Parkway (MD 295) to the Howard County Line—Urbanization, Safety and Enhancements: It is appropriate to study the need for improvements along this section to maintain safe operation for motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists. While we see the need to provide accessibility and mobility improvements in this area, we emphasize and reaffirm the overarching need to advance, and not to impede, the MD 175 improvements from MD 170 to the Baltimore Washington Parkway.

East Ordnance Road (MD 710) from Governor Ritchie Highway (MD 2) to Baltimore City Line—Urban Multilane Reconstruction: This roadway serves local travel and increasing truck traffic associated with the Port of Baltimore. This roadway should be evaluated as a corridor rather than as a series of spot improvements.

SYSTEM PRESERVATION/HIGHWAY SAFETY PROJECTS

The following should be studied to identify the necessary improvements needed to improve motorist safety and relieve congestion, and then advanced to construction.

Office of Economic Adjustment-funded BRAC Intersection Study. Anne Arundel County in partnership with SHA completed studies to develop 30 percent plans for various intersections near Fort Meade. We believe that these intersections should be advanced so that the effort made to date is not lost:

- Reece Road (MD 174) at Pioneer Drive
- Reece Road (MD 174) at Telegraph Road (MD 170)
- Ridge Road (MD 713) at Severn Road

Solomons Island Road (MD 2) from the Calvert County Line to Central Avenue (MD 214). We are seeking funds to identify and construct spot safety improvements throughout the corridor, and specifically:

- Between Owensville Road (MD 255) and Fairhaven Road (MD 423), we are seeking design and construction funds.
- At Mount Zion-Marlboro Road (MD 408) and Bayard Road (MD 422), we are seeking construction funds for a new slip ramp and design of long term improvements.
- At Harwood Drive, we are seeking funds to improve safety.
- At Owensville-Sudley Road, we are seeking funds to improve safety.

Paul T. Pitcher Memorial Highway (MD 100) at Magothy Bridge Road (MD 607), adding construction of an eastbound to southbound left turn lane

Telegraph Road (MD 170) improvements at major intersections between MD 32 and MD 100

Deale Road (MD 256) at Franklin Manor Road, we are seeking construction funds.

Governor Ritchie Highway (MD 2) at Earleigh Heights Road-Magothy Bridge Road, we are requesting design funds.

Bay Front Road (MD 258) at MD 794, we are seeking funds to improve safety.

Aris T. Allen Boulevard (MD 665) at Forest Drive and Chinguapin Round Road, we are seeking planning funding as requested via resolution from the City of Annapolis.

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Southern Maryland Boulevard (MD 4) at Talbot Road we are seeking funds for safety improvements

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

The following projects, when funded for construction, will help revitalize these redeveloping communities by improving pedestrian circulation.

Baltimore-Annapolis Boulevard (MD 648) from Cromwell Light Rail Station to Arundel Expressway (MD 10), we are seeking funds for design.

Belle Grove Road (MD 170) from MD 648 to the Baltimore City Line, we are seeking planning and design funds for section from I-895 to Baltimore City Line.

Deale-Churchton Road (MD 256) from Bay Front Road East (MD 258) to Rockhold Creek Streetscape, we are seeking planning and design funds for the balance of the project.

Taylor Avenue (MD 435) from Rowe Boulevard (MD 70) to end of State maintenance, we are seeking planning funds.

SIDEWALK PROGRAM

The following projects will assist in connecting neighborhoods with schools, rail stations and activity centers. It also provides residents with an alternative means of mobility.

Governor Ritchie Highway (MD 2) from Furnace Branch Road to 1st Avenue

Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard (MD 648)

- Jones Station Road to Round Bay Road
- McKinsey Road West to Governor Ritchie Highway (MD 2)
- Oak Lane to Cromwell Light Rail Station
- Marley Middle School to Mountain Road (MD 177)

Central Avenue (MD 214) from Solomons Island Rd (MD 2) to Mayo Rd (MD 253)

Mayo Road (MD 253) from Solomons Island Rd (MD 2) to Central Avenue (MD 214)

Camp Meade Road (MD 170) from Cabin Branch Lane to North Linthicum Light Rail

Telegraph Road (MD 170) from Georgia Avenue to Grandview Avenue

Fort Smallwood Road (MD 173) from Duval Highway to Sunset Elementary School

Ridge Road (MD 713) from Clark Road to Galetown Road

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Defense Highway (MD 450) from Tarrytown Avenue to Good Hope Road

TRAILS/BIKEWAYS

Broadneck Peninsula Trail – Funding is requested for Phase II of this project, which consists of a Class I paved hiker-biker trail approximately 1.2 miles in length. This phase of the project extends from Green Holly Drive to Bay Dale Drive, running parallel with College Parkway, where it connects with an existing County trail at Bay Dale Drive. Phase II of this trail is currently in design, and schematic plans, suitable for a Transportation Enhancement Program grant, have been completed. The County would welcome State or Federal assistance with the construction of Phase II of this important trail.

South Shore Trail – Funding is requested for Phase II of this project, which consists of a Class I paved hiker-bike trail approximately two miles in length. This phase of the project extends from MD 3 in Millersville to Sappington Station Road in Odenton. Features along this Trail include the 857-acre Dairy Farm Park, the Odenton Natural Area, and Arundel High School. Phase II of the South Shore Trail will also connect to the existing WB&A Trail connecting Odenton to Conway Road along the WB&A Rail right-of-way. Phase II of this trail extends approximately 2.3 miles in length. This phase of the project extends from MD 3 in Millersville to Sappington Station Road in Odenton; Phase II of this trail is currently in design and schematic plans suitable for a Transportation Enhancement Program grant and will soon be complete. The County would welcome State or Federal assistance with construction of Phase II of this important trail.